



19th June 2015

Mrs Linda Speed
Headteacher
St James Church of England Primary School
Lyme Street
Haydock
St Helens
Merseyside WA11 0NL

Assessment Date: 17th June 2015

Summary

Thank you to you, your staff and students for hosting my visit to carry out your IQM assessment. My visit was well planned and organised by Emma Jones who also produced the detailed and thorough self-evaluation document. The IQM Self-Evaluation Report Document is very well organised and all elements of the standard provide evidence which is clearly referenced to a wide range of documentation, activities and named personnel with specific responsibilities. The process which the school adopted in collating the evidence has resulted in an accurate self-assessment of its policies, awareness and practice.

I really appreciate the efforts that were made to help me complete my assessment. Everyone I met was helpful and spoke positively about their experience at the school. Please pass on my thanks to staff, students, parents/carers and Governors for being so generous with their time and for making me so welcome. Especially Megan Hobson, Logan Pilkington and Ellis Davies, they are great ambassadors for your school. During my visit I was able to see the school at work and was able to experience the unique culture and ethos. First impressions on arriving at the school were of confident and enthusiastic students and caring staff in a well-resourced and well-organised learning environment.

St James Church of England Primary School is committed to including all children. It has developed an ethos and a culture that seek to include all members of the school community. The Head-teacher, senior leadership team and all staff are focussed on supporting the children to achieve and raising their self-esteem. Children really enjoy coming to school and stated that 'everyone is close and like each other' and 'lessons are great and the teachers try to make learning fun'. 'Teachers and children share'.

Children say that they can identify adults in the school who they would go to, to ask for help should they be worried or concerned about anything. From when they enter the school to the end of Key Stage 2 the children make good progress. Children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who are eligible for the pupil premium also make good progress. The school is focused on improving the attainment and wider outcomes for all children and promoting the learning of the lowest achievers.

Teachers plan very carefully to identify and meet the needs of all children utilising the skills of the support staff and often 'tandem teach'. Children say that they find their teachers' marking really helpful and that it tells them what they have done well and what they need to do to improve. The children are involved in setting their targets, in assessing their progress and know the targets that they are working towards. Teaching is good with an increasing number of lessons in which the quality of teaching is outstanding.

There are regular formal classroom observations, scrutiny of the children's work and of teachers' planning. There are excellent relationships between the children and the staff and staff provide positive role models for the children by modelling the behaviours which they expect. When children become upset and frustrated staff quietly and patiently reassure them and provide them with the strategies to manage and take responsibility for their own behaviour. Behaviour in classrooms, around the school building and outside in the playground is good. The school is continuously challenging itself to improve and there are effective systems in place to both support the children and their families. The school 'knows itself' really well and has high expectations of all members of the school community.

Good opportunities exist for all school staff to access training whether through in-house or external courses. Teachers, and support staff work together as a team and support for children in the classroom is very well deployed. There is a whole school approach to meeting the needs of the children. Physical access in and around the school is good. Classrooms and corridors are full of attractive displays of the children's current work that is annotated. The school building is clean and well decorated and together with the outside areas is free of litter. Children and staff use computers, laptops, tablets and the interactive whiteboards to effectively support learning. The school is well resourced with good quality teaching and learning materials and children were seen to be able to access all of the resources which they needed for their learning. The school's website provides access to lots and lots of information about the work of the school.

Parents say that the school has an 'open door' policy, that 'the teaching is great', that 'children receive a lot of support' and 'learn to become confident'. Parents say that they always receive a very warm welcome and that staff are 'transparent, open and honest'. They say that the school's communication with them is very good and that the school is proactive in letting them know how well their child is doing at school without them having to ask for the information. The school governors are regular visitors to the school and are well informed about the work of the school and the progress which the children are making. The Governors are very clear that 'this is an inclusive school' and that 'the school will do everything it can to meet the children's needs' on 'an individual basis'. Governors have first-hand knowledge of the work of the school through monitoring and evaluation visits and complete visit reports which are used to brief other governors.

Haydock ward is in the south east area of St Helens. St James is surrounded by an area of mixed deprivation. Although the school's deprivation indicator at 0.25 is in line with national (0.24) it must be noted that the % of higher social class households is 13.6% with national at 20.1% and the average % of adults with higher education in Haydock is 10.8% compared to England 19.9%. The school is fed into from a part of Haydock with a lower deprivation than others, this can be seen through their FSM at 41.8% (Nat Average is 26.6%). A significant number of pupils come from fragmented homes, which is difficult to quantify or compare nationally (vulnerability matrix). 17.5% of pupils are at School Action (Nat 8.91%) and 10.2% at School Action + or with a statement (Nat 7.7%). The main SEN concerns continue to be behaviour, emotional and social difficulties, speech, language and communication alongside moderate and specific learning

difficulties. The school does not have nursery provision and therefore has built up strong links with a local private provider to enhance transition into FS2.

There are currently 197 pupils on roll. Gender in cohorts is a mixed picture but mainly girl majority with the exception of Y5. FSM 41.8% compared to National 26.6%, Ethnic groups 6.1% compared to National 29.7%, EAL 5.4% compared to National 18.8%, Stability 79.2% compared to National 85.9%.

The school places a high importance on the relationship it forms with the families it serves, as it realises the benefits of engagement for the children. The majority of our parents have in the past been passive participants who reluctant to engage, due to a lack confidence in themselves and the system. This has improved greatly as reflected in our parent questionnaires, response has grown from 2010 19% of parents replied to a 38% response in 2014.

There is an extremely high degree of satisfaction among parents and carers, who are happy with their children's experience at school. The school is working to bridge gaps and support all parents. PTFA events are now well attended and the school facilitates events that are increasingly focused on learning and how parents can help children, the importance of parents as educators and the partnership with the school. Communication diaries and an open door policy to all staff have had a positive impact. A school newsletter is shared with all parents every two weeks and school news is a feature in the monthly parish magazine. The website is regularly updated and school is currently working on a virtual learning platform.

The key strengths of the school:-

- There is a highly positive staff culture where enthusiasm and passion for the development of pupils' learning shines through.
- Pupils' needs always come first and they are encouraged to do their best, irrespective of ability, disability, social background, ethnicity or gender, as a consequence they achieve well.
- Pupils are offered a varied curriculum that caters for all abilities and learning styles, supporting the inclusive ethos of the school.
- There is a busy yet relaxed and comfortable learning atmosphere within the school. There is a buzz about the school that is evident as soon as you step into the school's reception area.
- The school has worked hard to provide a learning environment that encourages its pupils to be successful. This is clearly seen in the excellent current displays that abound in every classroom and corridor with a focus on photographs and celebrating pupils' work and achievements. This is clearly seen on each classroom's 'Learning Wall.'
- The emotional and educational support for all pupils is a feature of the school and is a key element of the success of the school.
- The school as a 'Church of England School' has strong Christian principles which are part of the fabric of the school and are the cornerstone upon which the school operates and which the pupils' education is based on as their mission statement suggests 'Through God's love we enjoy, we learn, we achieve.'

- Pupils feel safe, nurtured and proud of their school and of the progress they make.
- They are happy, enthusiastic, well-motivated and included in the decision making process through the school council.
- Staff morale is high and excellent relationships were evident throughout my visit between staff, pupils, parents and governors. More than once I was told ‘we are a family.’
- Staff lead by example and model inclusive practice with passion and professionalism.
- There is a very strong Governing Body that is fully involved and integrated into the life of the school. A governor is linked to each class and visits as often as possible engaging with pupils. Pupils told me they look forward to the visits! After visits governors will write a report for the rest of the governing body. They actively promote the inclusion policy of the school with a dedicated governor who meets the Inclusion manager termly.
- Governors are well trained and knowledgeable about the school and provide both support and challenge to the school. They know that their contributions are valued by the school.

I am of the opinion that the school fully meets the standard required by the Inclusion Quality Mark. There are only minor areas requiring development and the school is aware of these. I recommend that the school be awarded the Mark and be reassessed in 3 years’ time.

Assessor: Steve Gill

Findings confirmed by Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd:



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Joe McCann MBA NPQH
Director of Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd